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# Under Bill Casey, the CIA is back in business

## ARNOLD BEICHMAN

**W**illiam J. Casey, a tall, erudite man in his early 70s, has been director of Central Intelligence since the Reagan administration took office. During the last three years, it has been a rare day that his reputation and character have not been attacked, sometimes from the right, most often from the left.

The attacks have focused largely on financial matters which occurred long before he took his present post and most recently, the so-called "Briefinggate" affair involving Carter strategy documents allegedly obtained by Reagan election officials during the 1980 campaign. While no crime has ever been spelled out, ethical violations have been charged. So Mr. Casey, who enjoys Cabinet status, has been a storm center since 1981, accused of all manner of devilry having to do with everything except what kind of director of Central Intelligence he has been and how has intelligence fared under his direction.

This short report, based on an informal study, will argue that Mr. Casey has done the best job of any CIA director in the past decade. In one sense, he took on the job at a time when the prestige of the CIA was so low there was no way to go but up. Mr. Casey's predecessor, Admiral Stansfield Turner, rightly or wrongly, had a low opinion of the agency he was assigned to administer by President Carter. The United States and its allies paid the price of poor intelligence and, most important, insufficient and even unreliable national estimates so essential for decision-making policy executives. In addition, before Mr. Turner's appointment, there had been a revolving door sequence of CIA directors — William Colby, James Schlesinger and finally George Bush, now vice president, all in one year, an event hardly calculated to restore confidence within the organization.

Under Mr. Casey, a number of im-

portant steps to rebuild U.S. intelligence have been undertaken under the continuing scrutiny of two congressional select committees on intelligence to which Mr. Casey must report regularly, particularly about any proposed covert actions approved by the president. In other words, CIA secrets must be shared

with some 30 congressmen in both houses and their congressional staffs, a risky but now legalized procedure. Thus far, congressional oversight has worked fairly well, according to all reports. Whether the accountability system will continue to work in future congresses as the composition of the Select

Committees changes, is another matter.

Under Mr. Casey, the intelligence budget "has gone way the hell up," as one knowledgeable source puts it. In fact, the overall total for intelligence is at the highest level it has ever been, having risen steadily each of the past three years. Since the budgetary totals are classified, no statistical comparisons can be made. However, to have been able to obtain increased appropriations means that the congressional committees are sufficiently satisfied with CIA activities.

Second, the CIA is back in the covert-action business, an area from which it had virtually withdrawn during the Turner directorship. Covert action is a form of intelligence activity intended to effectuate by secret means the aims of U.S. foreign policy. Overt action encompasses diplomatic activity and negotiations and, when these break down, war itself. An example of covert action would occur if Britain, targeted by Libyan terrorists, were to seek out and support Libyan exile dissidents in order to help overthrow the directing genius of contemporary terrorism, Libya's dictator, Col. Muammar Qaddafi.

Third, there has been a large increase in the number of national estimates sent to intelligence consumers, from the president on down. The whole point of intelligence-gathering — clandestine collection and covert action — is to put together the information collected in some logical order so that recommendations for actions

can be made and meaningful policy decisions undertaken. Analysis and estimates are the third — and perhaps most crucial — ingredient of an intelligence system.

Fourth, there has been a massive attempt to rebuild human intelligence — HUMINT — resources. In the pre-Casey period, great reliance was placed on ELINT — electronic intelligence-gathering by "spy-in-the-sky" technology. While much of the instrumentation is ingenious and even startling in its capabilities, the instruments themselves lack one essential attribute: They cannot look inside a man's head — say, a member of the Soviet Politburo — to determine what Soviet policymakers plan to do. HUMINT was once part of the answer and it is now being restored to its essential place in the intelligence panoply.

Fifth, an attempt has been made to rebuild the last and perhaps the most important ingredient in the intelligence schema — counterintelligence. This ingredient is the guard set up by any intelligence agency to prevent the enemy "mole" or even the double agent, from penetrating the inner sanctum.

Kim Philby, the British-born Soviet agent, ran British counterintelligence until he became suspect and resigned. Therefore, during the time he was in charge of British CI, British intelligence existed only in name. The various congressional investigations of CIA and their repercussions within CIA during the mid-1970s led to a wholesale dismantling of CI a decade ago. Whether or not CI has been successfully rebuilt, no one can

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- JON REIDER

# CIA makes its brazen return

For the last few years, we've heard a lot about how the 1960s are over. Hollywood has even made a movie, *The Big Chill*, to celebrate their passing. Like much of my mellowing generation, I have hesitantly but inevitably compromised my youthful ideals and the realities of being over 30 (even almost 40) in the '80s. Unlike some of my peers, however,

## VIEWPOINT

until now I haven't felt too bad about the passing of the '60s.

Although I enjoy telling today's Stanford students about how we took on LBJ, the War in Vietnam, and the Draft (the real if-you-go-you-might-die Draft, not just a postcard registration), I also tell them to be grateful they don't live in an age of total commitment, where you have to declare and prove your moral and political purity in new ways every week. All in all, those may have been exciting times, but they were

CIA chief, blitzed the campus for a day, presenting a new image of the CIA as a non-interventionist almost liberal government research service, more an adjunct to the Library of Congress than a nest of spies. All that stuff about subverting annoying leftist governments, sending Castro exploding cigars, was a thing of the past, we were told. Jimmy thought all that was vaguely immoral. I don't know if anyone was convinced by Turner's performance, but it doesn't matter now because the current administration has reversed even the cosmetic changes and the "open government" rhetoric of its predecessor.

And so the CIA is back, spending thousands of our tax dollars to entice Stanford students into its employ. They are using all the standard Orwellian language (remember, it is 1984) about "career opportunities," "professional careers," "personal satisfaction," "work of vital importance," and so on. They

probably not relevant. Who wants to know about primitive tribes in this era of electronic satellite? Well, maybe in Afghanistan: Who knows? I hope you anthropologists gave it a try anyway.

Of course, the humanities were sadly absent from the CIA's list of desirable skills for the defenders of freedom. Philosophy, religious studies, English, don't seem to have much use. Oh, you have a double major in I.R.? Come right along. And, say, doesn't philosophy have a lot of math in it these days? You never can tell — they might find a place for that too.

I don't know what I'm worried about. The University is still neutral officially in politics — everyone agrees on that, don't they? After all, it's not as if ROTC were coming back, or as if the White House had snookered us into accepting the Reagan library when we didn't want it at all. We're just neutral, that's all, calmly extending the frontiers of knowledge and doing good deeds.

I don't know what I'm worried about. After all, my hands aren't all that clean. I too eat at the Stanford trough; it's good enough for me. I have former students who work for Citicorp and Procter & Gamble. I've made peace with that.

What's the difference between those outfits and the CIA?

The CIA has lost its sense of shame. They've come out of the closet with a vengeance. My guess is that they have done their market research well (the CIA is big on research, remember) and they've gotten their money's worth from their ads. I don't know what bothers me. They have as much right to advertise as the next guy, and maybe, to borrow an argument from the ROTC debate, we'll be better off (safer?) with liberally minded Stanford-types in the CIA, not just Yalies and Princetonians. I don't find that too convincing, however.

There's nothing to worry about. I really believe that. I just felt better when the CIA was ashamed of itself. They were always there, of course, but they weren't quite so proud of themselves. I wish they'd tell me what they're so proud about. That would help a lot.

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also very crazy ones, and the casualties are legion.

The other day a former student asked me to respond in print to the full page ad for the CIA in *The Daily*. I told him that I had given up tilting windmills (I teach "Don Quixote" now instead; it's safer and more fun.) It was time to pass the torch; let him do it. Maybe if I could be amusing, but how can you be amusing about the CIA, for God's sake? So I let it pass, until the ad appeared again and again like a Lite beer commercial. Now I realize that the '60s really are over, all my anecdotes about the Golden Age of David Harris and Bruce Franklin notwithstanding.

A few years ago, Admiral Stansfield Turner, Jimmy Carter's

seem to want practically everybody; not just the science and math type for whom all the companies compete. They want people with skills in economics, political science and something called overseas intelligence. (Are there some Stanford students who already know about that? Yes, I imagine there are.)

Almost any subject will fit in if you're the right person. Even law, though the CIA wanting legal experts is a little like the Catholic church wanting experts on birth control. They want to study it only to understand its basic principles. It's nice to know that the social sciences have job opportunities — at least they're not too fuzzy for the CIA. Sociology was missing, it's true (too left-wing?), and anthropology is